



POTTSTOWN METROPOLITAN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

140 College Drive, Pottstown, PA 19464 | PARRCoordinator@gmail.com | 484-945-0200

PARRC Meeting Minutes

October 23rd, 2019

5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

@PAHWF

In Attendance:

Jay Erb, North Coventry

Karen Nocella, East Coventry Township

Greg Churach, Upper Pottsgrove Township

Michael Lenhart, Borough of Pottstown

Charlie Valentine, West Pottsgrove Township

John Cover, MCPC

Craig Colistra, PAHWF

Meeting notes:

1. Welcome and Introductions.
2. Status of IA presentations – East Coventry Township will be presenting it on the second Monday, November 11th, at the BOS meeting. North Coventry Township will be presenting it on Monday, October 28th at the BOS meeting. Lower Pottsgrove Township already presented. Township solicitors need to review the IA and send any comments. It was suggested that, if it is approved by all the Township solicitors, the ordinance could be advertised by February and then passed in March by each Township.
3. Meeting minutes from September 25th, 2019 were approved with revision. J. Erb suggested adding to the last sentence under #6“unless by ordinance and not by resolution.” K. Nocella and C. Colistra abstained.
4. Status of revisions to procedures documents – M. Lenhart stated that it will depend on the comments from the Township solicitors after they review the IA.
5. Strategic Plan – M. Lane discussed the 2 proposals submitted for PARRC review as well as the document he sent to the members - “What is a Strategic Plan”. He will acquire another proposal for member’s consideration. Further discussion will be tabled until next meeting.
6. PMRPC grants – C. Colistra stated that New Hanover Township is considering submitting a grant application.
7. Mowing contracts – The Township currently spends 48 hrs/week with 2 crew members mowing grass. G. Churach developed a spreadsheet of tasks for contractors to bid on associated with mowing park land in Upper Pottsgrove Township. If the price is right and the BOC approves of it, it will free up the Public Works staff to do other projects. He and the Public Works Director met with 3 contractors and toured the parks and 60 acres of land needing mowing. He will keep PARRC apprised of the bid results.
8. “Know Your Parks” – Cynthia Lawrence was not able to get more information from the City of San Jose. G. Churach stated that Upper Pottsgrove is probably a few years away from holding an event like this. Discussion included if each Township would do it or would PARRC do the event? It was decided to bring it up at the next PARRC meeting to discuss what the event would be, when, where and where any equipment would be stored.
9. Park Research Project – C. Colistra stated that the survey announcement and QR code cards will still be in use until spring to get more data. The QR code cards should still be given out to residents when they visit the Township Building.
10. Secret Valley Trail (SVT) – M. Lane discussed that from the Boro to Boyertown, the SVT Steering Committee has prioritized using a section of the Upper West Trail in West Pottsgrove Township and Goose Run Trail and Levengood Road and other roads to get to Boyertown in Berks County. They are also proposing the



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implementation of a loop trail in Boyertown that would eventually connect to the rest of the Secret Valley Trail south.

11. COG – M. Lane discussed his meeting with COG at North Coventry Township. He updated COG as to PARRC initiatives and activities. His last update to them was 2 years ago. COG meets quarterly during the year.
12. Nature Rx program – M. Lane and C. Colistra discussed their meeting with Casey Fenoglio, Community Outreach Program Coordinator at Tower Health and Elisa Sarantschin with the Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education and director of the NaturePHL program on September 19th. We met at the Roxborough Clinic that is a pediatric care center that is part of CHOP. The program is a collaboration between CHOP, Phila Parks & Rec, U.S. Forest Service and the Schuylkill Center for Environmental Ed. The main concept is to increase the activity levels of children by just being outdoors connecting with nature. It is a program that encourages physicians and other health care providers to “prescribe” parks to patients, promoting these spaces as a place to get and stay healthy. A brief questionnaire helps doctors determine if a patient should receive a nature prescription to a park near their home. A database of parks is provided to the doctors. A “nature navigator” follows up with the patients. In Pottstown, Tower Health, Schuylkill River Greenways, PAHWF and the Regional Recreation Coordinator are considering assisting Tower Health with a “pilot program” at a nearby clinic. An inventory of the PARRC’s facilities was recently completed by the research assistant which could be used. Next steps are to coordinate discussions with doctors in Philly with doctors in Pottstown, funding and procedures for developing a program. J. Erb stated that a similar program was done about 5 years ago in Chester County called Prescription for Health. Lots of chiropractors were on board as they elicited prescribers for their services. There was also a “Walk with the Doctor” about 10 years ago in the Boro and at Riverfront Park, there was the Mercury Mile 2 years ago. It was requested that the members be sent info concerning the NaturePHL program.
13. ULI interview - M. Lane and C. Colistra discussed the Urban Land Institutes visit to Pottstown. They were hired to interview stakeholders in the community to give them information and ideas about how to inspire economic development in Pottstown. ULI was in Pottstown decades ago and helped formulate ideas after major industries started leaving. Some of those ideas were implemented and took years to accomplish. The recommendations will be presented at the Steelriver Playhouse on October 25th.
14. Hanover Meadows Park playground equipment – M. Lane discussed that NorCo Elementary School was buying new playground equipment and they wanted to donate their old equipment to North Coventry Township. The company that was removing the equipment, Coventry Properties, cuts the grass for the school district and they entered into an agreement with them to remove the equipment. Coventry Properties wanted to continue the donation but they wanted to be compensated for re-installing it. M. Lane and Doug Maynard, GameTime rep, inspected the equipment and thought it was in good enough shape, with a few minor replacements, to be used by the Township. Coventry Properties removed the equipment but in doing so, cut off the supporting columns and lifted entire sections instead of taking the bolts off of each section and lifting them separately and removing the concrete footings. To re-install the equipment, it would cost as much as a new piece of equipment because new 3’ steel columns would have to be welded on to the existing columns. Coventry Properties is not an authorized GameTime equipment installer. In the end, the Township declined the donation.
15. East Coventry Township (ECT) is developing new wayfinding and entrance signage for their parks. Preliminary concepts have been developed. When the concepts are finalized, ECT will present them to PARRC.
16. PAHWF grants submitted – The PAHWF selection board will be meeting within the next few weeks and will make an announcement of final awards in the beginning of December.
17. PMRPC grant round – M. Lane submitted 5 grant applications with potentially 2 more within the next week.



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18. Other grants – ECT was interested in submitting to a grant program to fund bridges needed in the parks. ECT would meet with M. Lane to discuss the bridge projects.
19. Updates from the PARRC members:
 - a. PAHWF: M. Lane & C. Colistra is moving forward with researching funding programs to implement the Tri-County Trails. C. Colistra is developing a PPT for meetings with funders.
 - b. MCPC: They are sponsoring a Planning Smarter event – “Greening of Main Street” in Lansdale Boro on Wednesday the 29th from 4 – 6 PM. Henry Stroud, Trail Development & Open Space Director, left his position to go back home to California. They are looking for candidates to fill the position.
 - c. North Coventry Township – J. Erb stated that their Mt. Bike Team from the high school won first place in points in racing at a recent competition. But, did not have enough points to win overall as they did not have enough points for their service project and went from first to fifth place. They did do a service project on a trail in Coventry Woods and elevated an area with rocks and silt and soil and added water bars. There were about 30 attendees for the project. J. Erb will send PARRC more info.
 - d. Pottstown Borough: No Comment.
 - e. Lower Pottsgrove: No Comment.
 - f. West Pottsgrove Township: C. Valentine stated they are looking at engineering services for the bridge over the Manatawny Creek.
 - g. Upper Pottsgrove Township: G. Churach stated that they are having their semi-annual cleanup in conjunction with International Cleanup Day. He wants to include all the counties and will send PARRC more information. He also stated that Althouse Arboretum Community Garden has leftover vegetables if anyone is interested.
 - h. Douglass Township: No Comment.
 - i. East Coventry Township: The Township had 15 – 20 people come to the Fall Nature Walk on Saturday, October 19, 2019. They had baked goods at the schoolhouse.

Adjournment: 6:20 PM

Recorder: M. Lane

2019 Meeting Schedule

(All meetings to be held at 5:00 PM in the Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Foundation Conference Room, 152 East High Street, 5th floor, Pottstown, PA 19464):

<i>January 23</i>	<i>February 27</i>	<i>March 27</i>	<i>April 24</i>	<i>May 22</i>	<i>June 26</i>
<i>July 24</i>	<i>August 28</i>	<i>September 25</i>	<i>October 23</i>	<i>December 5</i>	

Next meeting: December 5, 2019 5:00 pm @PAHWF